

## Birds of the Lluidas Vale (Worthy Park) Region, Jamaica

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DURING the past three years, the author has conducted investigations on the avifauna of Jamaica. Five trips were made to the island (June 14-August 17, 1969, December 20-26, 1969, April 14-May 24, 1970, June 15-July 15, 1970, and June 4-June 24, 1971). The main purpose of these visits was to study the ecology, behavior, and distribution of the Jamaican Woodpecker (*Centurus radiolatus*), but observations were also made on the total avifauna of the island. Many of the birds found on Jamaica are poorly known from the standpoint of distribution, ecology, and behavior. Therefore, the following information on the avifauna of the Lluidas Vale (Worthy Park) region, St. Catherine, Jamaica, should be instructive for future analyses.

### DESCRIPTION

Lluidas Vale (1250 ft.) is located in an interior valley or polje. Both cockpit and tower karst are present in the area. Cockpit karst consists essentially of a succession of cone-like hills with alternating enclosed conical depressions or "cockpits." Tower karst is made up of steep-sided, forest-covered hills or mogotes (Sweeting, 1958). Each hill or group of hills is separated by a more or less flat alluvial plain that is often seasonally inundated. More or less permanent ponds and sinkholes are present at the base of the mogotes. Much of the original vegetation has been cleared from the valley, primarily for growing sugar cane, planting citrus, and raising cattle, but it is still present in the limestone mountains (Long Mountain which is an extension of the Mount Diablo Plateau) and cockpit hills surrounding the valley. Elevations vary from 1500 to 3250 ft. The vegetation of this area is classified as Wet Limestone forest (Asprey and Robbins, 1953). This type of forest is found in areas of limestone rocks where annual precipitation exceeds 75 inches and may range up to 150 inches. Many of the trees in this region have epiphytes, lianes, and bromeliads growing in profusion. Some of the characteristic trees of this community are broadleaf (*Terminalia latifolia*), Jamaican cedar (*Cedrela odorata*), sweetwoods (*Nectandra* spp.), bulletwoods (*Dipholis* spp.), various figs

(*Ficus* spp.), and many others. In the upland pastures, where much of the original vegetation has been removed, characteristic trees include guango (*Samanea saman*), large figs, prickly yellow (*Zanthoxylum martinicensis*), pimento (*Pimenta pimenta*), and trumpet tree (*Cecropia peltata*).

#### SPECIES ACCOUNTS

During the period of observation 87 species were recorded. Included in this count are 21 of the 24 species of land birds endemic to Jamaica and 38 of the 47 species that breed in Jamaica (Bond, 1961) but also occur elsewhere.

The following terminology is used.

Common: Found on all visits to the proper habitat, often in large numbers.

Fairly Common: Seen on a majority of visits to the proper habitat.

Uncommon: Present each year in proper habitat and season(s), but in small numbers.

Rare: Irregular occurrence in small numbers, not predictable, and overlooked or absent on many visits to the proper habitat.

*Podiceps dominicus*. Least Grebe; "Diving Dapper, Dabchick." Common permanent resident on freshwater ponds.

*Podilymbus podiceps*. Pied-billed Grebe; "Diving Dapper, Hell Diver." Fairly common permanent resident on freshwater ponds.

*Butorides virescens*. Green Heron; "Little Gaulin, Crabcatcher." Common permanent resident around freshwater ponds and marshy areas.

*Hydranassa tricolor*. Louisiana Heron; "Gaulin." Uncommon permanent resident on freshwater ponds and marshy areas.

*Florida caerulea*. Little Blue Heron; "Blue Gaulin, Gaulin." Uncommon permanent resident on freshwater ponds and marshy areas.

*Ardeola ibis*. Cattle Egret; "Cattle Gaulin." Common permanent resident, usually found in flocks among cattle.

*Egretta thula*. Snowy Egret; "White Gaulin, Gaulin." Uncommon permanent resident on freshwater ponds and marshy areas.

*Nyctanassa violacea*. Yellow-crowned Night Heron; "Night

Gaulin, Crabcatcher." Uncommon to fairly common permanent resident on freshwater ponds and marshy areas.

*Cathartes aura*. Turkey Vulture; "John Crow." Common permanent resident throughout the area, but more common in open areas.

*Buteo jamaicensis*. Red-tailed Hawk; "Chicken Hawk." Uncommon to fairly common permanent resident in the hills and upland pastures surrounding the valley.

*Falco sparverius*. Kestrel; "Killy Hawk, Bird Hawk." Fairly common permanent resident in cultivated areas and upland pastures.

*Porzana carolina*. Sora. Winter resident. An adult was observed walking over the water lilies and along the marshy edge of a small pond on April 23-25, 1970.

*Porphyryla martinica*. Purple Gallinule; "Coot." Common during the spring, but rare during the summer. Usually one or two individuals were observed on freshwater ponds with marshy border. Those observed during the spring were probably transients or winter residents.

*Gallinula chloropus*. Common Gallinule; "Coot." Common permanent resident on freshwater ponds.

*Fulica americana*. Coot. Fairly common during the spring of 1970 in freshwater ponds.

*Jacana spinosa*. Jacana; "Spanish Coot, Coot." Common permanent resident on freshwater ponds.

*Charadrius vociferus*. Killdeer. Fairly common transient during the spring of 1970, but also observed as late as the 21st of June 1971. Observations were on recently plowed fields and pond edges.

*Columba leucocephala*. White-crowned Pigeon; "Baldpate." Common permanent resident in woodlands and hills surrounding valley.

*Zenaida aurita*. Zenaida Dove; "Pea Dove." Common permanent resident in open to semi-open areas, especially in the roads going through the sugar cane fields and citrus areas.

*Zenaida asiatica*. White-winged Dove; "White-wing, Lapwing." Uncommon during the winter and spring, but very common during the summer in upland pastures. Flocks up to thirty individuals were observed.

*Columbigallina passerina*. Ground Dove. Common permanent resident in open and semi-open areas.

*Leptotila jamaicensis*. White-bellied Dove; "White-belly." Uncommon to fairly common permanent resident in undergrowth of forested areas, occasionally occurring in more open areas.

*Geotrygon montana*. Ruddy Quail Dove; "Partridge." Uncommon to fairly common resident of the undergrowth of forested areas and forest edges.

*Geotrygon versicolor*. Crested Quail Dove; "Mountain Witch." Rare to uncommon resident of undergrowth in forested areas, usually allowing close approach before flying and then flying only a short distance.

*Amazona collaria*. Yellow-billed Parrot. Uncommon permanent resident in the hills and mountains (Long Mountain) surrounding the valley, but may be more common since many flocks of unidentifiable parrots were observed flying.

*Amazona agilis*. Black-billed Parrot. Uncommon to fairly common resident of the Long Mountain area. Usually observed flying or perched in small flocks of 2 to 6 individuals.

*Aratinga nana*. Olive-throated Parakeet. Common permanent resident in wooded and semiwooded areas. Roosting flocks numbering thousands of birds were observed.

*Forpus passerinus*. Guiana Parrotlet. Common permanent resident in upland pastures and wooded hills.

*Hyetornis pluvialis*. Chestnut-bellied Cuckoo; "Old Man Bird." Fairly common in upland pastures and forested areas.

*Saurothera vetula*. Jamaican Lizard Cuckoo; "Rain Bird." Uncommon permanent resident. More partial to wooded areas than the preceding species, and more often heard than seen.

*Crotophaga ani*. Smooth-billed Ani; "Tick Bird, Black Bird." Common permanent resident in open areas, especially pastures.

*Tyto alba*. Barn Owl; "White Owl, Screech Owl, Potoo." Uncommon permanent resident. Often observed flying over the pastures and cane fields at dusk. One individual roosted during the day in River Sink Cave at Worthy Park. Owl pellets obtained from this cave showed that rats (*Rattus*) form a principal item in its diet.

*Pseudoscops grammicus*. Jamaican Owl; "Brown Owl, Potoo." Rare to uncommon permanent resident, but may be more common

since its nocturnal habits make it difficult to find. One individual roosted during the day in Swansea Cave at Worthy Park.

*Nyctibius griseus*. Common Potoo. Apparently rare, but may be more common since its nocturnal habits make it difficult to observe. Seen on two different occasions (7 May and 1 July 1970), when it was sitting upright on fence post in cattle pasture area.

*Chordeiles minor*. Common Nighthawk; "Mosquito Hawk." Uncommon summer resident. Usually observed flying towards sunset and on cloudy days.

*Streptoprocne zonaris*. Collared Swift; "Rain Bird." Fairly common permanent resident, often observed flying at dusk and on cloudy days.

*Cypseloides niger*. Black Swift; Black Swallow, Swallow, Rain Bird." Uncommon permanent resident, observed under the same conditions as the Collared Swift.

*Tachornis phoenicobia*. Antillean Palm Swift; "Swallow." Common permanent resident in open to semiopened areas. Often observed flying during the day.

*Anthracothorax mango*. Jamaican Mango; "Doctor Bird, Hummingbird." Fairly common resident in open and semiopened situations.

*Trochilus polytmus*. Streamertail; "Doctor Bird, Hummingbird." Common permanent resident throughout the region.

*Mellisuga minima*. Vervain Hummingbird; "Bee Hummingbird." Fairly common permanent resident throughout the region.

*Todus todus*. Jamaican Tody; "Robin Redbreast." Common permanent resident in wooded pastures and limestone hills surrounding the valley.

*Centurus radiolatus*. Jamaican Woodpecker. Common permanent resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Sphyrapicus varius*. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Uncommon winter resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Platypsaris niger*. Jamaican Becard; "Tom Fool." Uncommon permanent resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Tyrannus dominicensis*. Gray Kingbird; "Petchary." Common summer resident in open and semiopened areas, often near human habitations.

*Tyrannus caudifasciatus*. Loggerhead Kingbird; "Petchary." Common permanent resident in upland pastures and wooded areas.

*Myiarchus stolidus*. Stolid Flycatcher; "Tom Fool." Uncommon permanent resident, the rarest of the *Myiarchus* flycatchers in the Lluidas Vale region. Observed in upland pasture areas.

*Myiarchus barbirostris*. Dusky-capped Flycatcher; "Little Tom Fool." Fairly common permanent resident in upland pastures and wooded areas.

*Myiarchus validus*. Rufous-tailed Flycatcher; "Big Tom Fool." Fairly common permanent resident in upland pastures and wooded areas.

*Contopus caribaeus*. Greater Antillean Pewee; "Little Tom Fool." Common permanent resident in upland pastures and wooded areas.

*Hirundo rustica*. Barn Swallow. Common spring transient. Flocks numbering hundreds of individuals observed flying over recently plowed fields.

*Petrochelidon fulva*. Cave Swallow. Common permanent resident. Occurring throughout the area, but more common in open and semi-open areas. Breeding in caves and depressions in the limestone hills.

*Corvus jamaicensis*. Jamaican Crow; "Jabbering Crow." Common in upland pastures and limestone hills. Small flocks of 3-4 individuals were usually seen.

*Mimus polyglottos*. Northern Mockingbird; "Nightingale." Common permanent resident in open and semi-open areas, often near human habitations.

*Dumetella carolinensis*. Catbird. Uncommon winter resident. Observed in dense undergrowth in upland pasture area.

*Turdus jamaicensis*. White-eyed Thrush; "Glass Eye." Fairly common permanent resident in wooded pastures and hills.

*Turdus aurantius*. White-chinned Thrush; "Hopping Dick." Common permanent resident, more partial to open areas than preceding species.

*Myadestes genibarbis*. Rufous-throated Solitaire; "Fiddler." Uncommon during the winter and spring. No individuals were recorded during the summers of 1969, 1970, and 1971. Possibly this species undergoes a vertical migration as has been observed by Kidd (1964).

*Sturnus vulgaris*. Starling. Fairly common in upland pastures, where flocks of up to 30 individuals were observed.

*Vireo modestus*. Jamaican White-eyed Vireo; "Sewi-sewi." Uncommon to fairly common permanent resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Vireo altiloquus*. Black-whiskered Vireo; "John Chewitt." Common summer resident in semiwooded and wooded areas.

*Vireo osburni*. Blue Mountain Vireo. Uncommon permanent resident in wooded areas.

*Mniotilta varia*. Black-and-white Warbler; "Ant Bird." Common winter resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Helmitheros vermivorus*. Worm-eating Warbler. Uncommon winter resident of undergrowth in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Parula americana*. Parula Warbler. Common winter resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Dendroica magnolia*. Magnolia Warbler. Uncommon winter resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Dendroica tigrina*. Cape May Warbler. Fairly common winter resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Dendroica caerulescens*. Black-throated Blue Warbler. Common winter resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Dendroica virens*. Black-throated Green Warbler. Uncommon to fairly common winter resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Dendroica striata*. Black-poll Warbler. Uncommon spring transient in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Dendroica pharetra*. Arrow-headed Warbler; "Ant Bird." Uncommon to fairly common permanent resident of forested areas and forest edges.

*Seiurus aurocapillus*. Ovenbird. Uncommon winter resident in undergrowth of wooded areas.

*Setophaga ruticilla*. American Redstart. Common winter resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Coereba flaveola*. Bananaquit; "Beanie Bird." Common permanent resident. Found throughout the region, but more common in semi-open areas and near human habitations.

*Euneornis campestris*. Orangequit; "Swee." Common permanent resident in wooded and semiwooded areas and especially common in citrus groves.

*Pyrrhuphonia jamaica*. Jamaican Euphonia; "Blue Quit." Common permanent resident in wooded and semiwooded areas, but often found near human habitations.

*Spindalis zena*. Stripe-headed Tanager; "Goldy, Goldfinch." Fairly common permanent resident in forested areas and forest edges, including citrus groves.

*Piranga olivacea*. Scarlet Tanager. Uncommon spring transient in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Quiscalus niger*. Greater Antillean Grackle; "Cling-cling." Uncommon to fairly common, occurring around human habitations and pastures.

*Icterus leucopteryx*. Jamaican Oriole; "Auntie Katie." Common resident in wooded and semiwooded areas. Occasionally observed near human habitations.

*Icterus galbula*. Baltimore Oriole. Rare spring transient, one male observed on 10 and 11 May 1970 in upland pasture area.

*Sicalis flaveola*. Saffron Finch; "Canary." Fairly common permanent resident, occurring in semiwooded areas, upland pastures, and gardens.

*Loxigilla violacea*. Greater Antillean Bullfinch; "Black Sparrow." Fairly common permanent resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Tiaris olivacea*. Yellow-faced Grassquit; "Grassquit." Common permanent resident in open and semi-open areas.

*Tiaris bicolor*. Black-faced Grassquit; "Grassquit." Permanent resident, not as common as the Yellow-faced Grassquit, but occurring in the same areas.

*Loxipasser anoxanthus*. Yellow-shouldered Grassquit; "Yellow-back." Uncommon permanent resident in wooded and semiwooded areas.

*Ammodramus savannarum*. Grasshopper Sparrow. Fairly common permanent resident of pasture areas.

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